

Designing the Evaluation Plan

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Formative and Summative Evaluations

Every proposal should have an evaluation section that varies with the complexity of the project. At minimum, the evaluation section must address the following two types:

Formative evaluation- To gain direction from improving projects as they are developing

- Include implementation and process components
- May lead to changes in the way the project is structured and carried out

Summative Evaluation- To determine project effectiveness after sufficient time to produce results

- Also called outcome or impact evaluation
- Determine what the project has actually accomplished in terms of its stated goals

The following five steps can help you develop an effective evaluation section for your project.

Step 1: Determine what is to be evaluated: Generally there is evaluation activities related to each project objective.

Step 2: Determine what type of evaluation is appropriate: In general, there are five types that vary in the complexity, amount of funds invested in evaluation, and who will conduct the evaluation (See next page for list of evaluation types).

Step 3: Determine who will conduct the evaluation: The project staff or an external evaluator

Step 4: Establish an evaluation budget: As a general rule, small projects devote 3-5%; large, multi-year, complex projects devote up to 10%.

Step 5: Describe the products of the evaluation: At a minimum, it is a part of the final report, but a separate evaluation report may be a product deliverable.

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Type of Evaluation	Relative Complexity	Types of Activities
Descriptive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simplest form • Least expensive • Conducted by project staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of services • How services were operated • How program was administered • Resources consumed • Characteristics of those impacted by project • Describe all outcomes
Operational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slightly more involved • Low expense • Conducted by project staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All of descriptive evaluation activities • Goals and objectives • Describe project components (start-up, recruitment, partnerships, etc.) • Explain short-term and intermediate outcomes • Explain project completion or institutionalization
Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slightly more involved • Moderate expense • Conducted by professional evaluator (may be staff or consultant) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focused on service delivery and administrative processes • Suggests causal relationships between what was done and outcomes • Generalize your experiences more broadly by providing insights into effectiveness • Look at efficacy of program in terms of outcomes or costs • Investigate operational features against results
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More complex • Moderate expense • Conducted by professional evaluator- staff or consultant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use existing data collection and statistical methods for data analysis • Requires database and analysis software • Focuses on qualitative and quantitative analysis of data
Impact Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long-term, involved • Most expensive • Requires third-party evaluator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Often contains experimental and control groups • Proves statistical significance • Long-term analysis of outcomes

Source: U.S. Department of Labor Grants Management Handbook, 2001

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Quantitative and Qualitative Data

Quantitative and Qualitative data must be collected to form the basis of sound decision-making for both formative and summative evaluations. Based upon the evaluation literature, quantitative and qualitative data is best collected through a mixed methods approach. The following is a summary of the common methods.

Surveys and questionnaires (using Likert scales, forced choices, gap analysis, and open-ended responses)

Focus groups and interviews (of participants in pilot studies)

Document studies (extracting data from other on-going Joliet Junior College evaluation methods such as enrollment reports, student surveys, etc.)

Fiscal evidence (purchase orders, performance testing of new hardware/software systems, constituent evaluation of new systems)

Menu of Common Data Collection Methods	
Data Collection Methods	Please check if you can use on your project
<i>Quantitative</i>	
Pre-test/post-test with control group	
Pre-test/post-test	
Existing databases (example: student records)	
Interview- forced choice	
Description statistics on participants (numbers, gender, ethnicity, etc.)	
Fiscal review	
Survey/questionnaire- forced choice, mail, phone, point of service	
<i>Qualitative</i>	
Fiscal review	
Survey/questionnaire- open ended questions, mail, phone, point of service	
Focus groups	
Observation	
Student journals	
Interviews-open-ended staff, participants, other stakeholders	
Document studies	
Case studies	
Work product	
Key informant/expert opinion	